



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

DON PRIDEMORE

TESTIMONY BY REPRESENTATIVE DON PRIDEMORE

"Married Person Tax Credit"

ASSEMBLY BILL 359

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

I would like to thank both the Chair, Representative Grigsby for giving my bill a hearing today and all the committee members for giving Assembly Bill 359 your attention as well.

As the merits of this bill should be fairly self explanatory, I will keep my comments brief.

For the last five decades America has been moving away from marriage as the foundation of the family unit. Although this trend has received much lip service, very little has been done to reverse the trend.

For many years, low-income couples have dealt with a welfare system that has discouraged couples from getting married and rewarded those who are not married. This bill is a first step to encourage marriage between those with low-incomes.

The bill creates a refundable individual income tax credit for married couples of \$200. The credit would apply to those couples making \$75, 000 a year or less.

The hurdles couples face in today's fast paced, materialistic world are many and sometimes perhaps even insurmountable. I believe we should take this *small* step to reinforce the values that our parents and grandparents brought forth. In addition, we should be ready to reward the behavior we seek to promote.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

State Representative Don Pridemore

Thank You Representative Grigsby and other committee members for listening to me speak on AB359

My name is Peter Kerr and I'm speaking on behalf of Wisconsin Fathers for Children and Families.

I like this bill. It's simple, it's clear and it's direct.

To me, a \$200 tax credit off my taxable income translates to \$50 in my pocket. And importantly it's the money I earned that stays in my pocket. As it relates to me, that \$50 dollars goes directly to Santa Claus who translates it into smiles for my family around the Christmas tree – that is priceless.

This bill clearly supports Families, which is what we are all about Wisconsin Fathers who support children and families. Families are the best place to raise children and enabling more smiles and less stress in the family unit is a good thing.

The Sole Custody State of Louisiana has the distinction of being the highest divorce state in America, if not the world. In Australia in 2006 the Equal Shared Parental Responsibility Act was written into law.

Only last week a study of 28,000 people by the Australian Institute of Family Studies reported a drop of 22% drop in family law cases going to court.

We need laws that support the family. It is the fundamental building block of a safe community and a strong country.

At the 2007 Democratic convention I was happy to hear quite often, in fact I believe it was the motto of that convention, so it's pleasing to see good small steps being made on bi-partisan issues that support marriages and make for strong communities.

Tomorrow I meet with Terence Ray of the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative to take up their position of chairperson of the Planning Research and Legislative committee. It is exactly Bills like this that we use as teaching examples of how the legislature supports families and children – after all that's what Wisconsin Fathers are all about – Children and Families.